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IN MEMORIAM

Prof. dr RICCARDO FERRO
University of Genova, Italy

1926 - 2006

Member of the Editorial Board of the Journal of Mining and Metallurgy

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Prof. Riccardo Ferro passed away on December 28, 2006 at the age of 80.

He was born in Genoa, Italy, in 1926 and got the "Laurea" degree in Industrial Chemistry in 1949. After a few years he became assistant professor at Genoa University.

He became full professor in 1964 at the University of Cagliari (Sardinia) and then moved to Catania (Sicily). Finally, in 1969, he came back to Genoa University where he has been Director of the Institute of Inorganic Chemistry until 1996, when the Institute was merged into the present Department of Chemistry and Industrial Chemistry.

In 1974 he was elected Dean of the Faculty of Sciences of Genoa University and he held this position for 20 years. During this period, for about 10 years, he was Coordinator of the National Conference of the Deans of the Italian Science Faculties.

He was responsible for several scientific projects of the Italian Research and University Ministry.

In 2000 he officially retired; he stopped his teaching activity but continued his research work as Professor Emeritus until the end.

He wrote more than 200 papers published in international journals and several contributions to books on phase diagrams and intermetallic alloys.

He was Member of the Editorial Board of the Journal of Mining and Metallurgy, Intermetallics and of the Journal of Phase Equilibria.

He was member of several scientific societies:

- member of the Italian Chemical Society and President of the Ligurian Division
- fellow member of the American Chemical Society
- fellow member of the ASM International

"in recognition of distinguished contributions to the field of materials science and materials engineering"

He got several national and international awards. Among them:

- the title of "Grande Ufficiale dell'Ordine al Merito della Repubblica" in 1987 by the President of the Italian Republic

- the Hume Rothery award by the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining, London (UK) in 1999, "in recognition of distinguished achievements concerned with phase relationships in metallic materials, or non-metallic materials of metallurgical interest"

- the Albert Easton White Distinguished Teaching award by the American Society of Materials International, Ohio (USA), in 2001 "for lifelong dedication to academic education, inspiring teaching of materials and outstanding scientific contribution to the thermochemistry of metal alloys and crystallochemistry of intermetallics"

During his long academic career he was able to form and guide a group of researchers working on several subjects related to the chemistry of metals and alloys, in particular, of rare earths and actinides. The main fields of interest were:

- experimental investigation of phase equilibria in binary and ternary systems

- measurement of thermochemical properties, especially enthalpy of formation by direct calorimetry

- crystallochemistry and, in particular, systematic investigation of crystal structures of families of intermetallic compounds

- thermodynamic modelling and prediction of phase equilibria (Calphad method) in binary and multi-component alloy systems

Another field of activity was the critical assessment of phase diagrams, crystal structures and thermodynamics. He had been introduced to this work by Prof. O. Kubaschewsky, who involved him in contributing to a series of books edited by the International Atomic Energy Agency concerning alloys of metals like Thorium, Beryllium, etc., which are relevant to the Nuclear technology. Then, some 20 years ago, Prof. G. Petzow involved him in the Ternary Alloys project. Within this project he compiled about 200 critical assessments of ternary alloy systems.

In the last years he was involved in writing a few books: one of them, whose title is "Intermetallic Chemistry", was finished just a few days before he died and will be published soon.

Gabriella Borzone